

**POLICY REGARDING THE INSTALLATION OF NEW WATER METERS  
AND APPURTENANCES ASSOCIATED WITH THE CITY-WIDE  
WATER METER REPLACEMENT PROGRAM**

**B-Box Obstructions**

The Contractor will need to shut off the main water supply at the buffalo box (B-Box), which is the City's external below-ground water shut off valve. For commercial and industrial customers, the water shut off valve may be located within a valve vault or accessible via a valve box due to its size.

1. If the external shut off valve is inoperable due to dirt or debris obstructing the valve, bent or leaning riser box, broken valve, landscaping, trees, gardens, fences, among others, the Contractor will, after notifying the City, repair the B-Box. As the B-Box, and that portion of the water service line from the B-Box to the watermain, is the City's property, the cost of the repairs and restoration will be borne by the City.
2. If the B-Box is obstructed and inoperable due to the placement of permanent structures such as garages, sheds, pools, decks, and ponds, among others, the Contractor will, after notifying the City, leave the existing B-Box and attempt to freeze the service line to allow for the installation of the meter. The City will then coordinate with property owner and arrange for the installation of a new B-box in a location that will be accessible. The cost of the line freeze, the new B-Box installation, and restoration will be borne by the City.
3. If the B-Box is obstructed and inoperable due to the placement of a mailbox structure (constructed of brick, stone, stucco, etc.), the Contractor will leave the existing B-Box and attempt to freeze the service line to allow for the installation of the meter. The City will then coordinate with the property owner and arrange for the brick mailbox to be removed and/or relocated to a location that will allow access to the B-Box. The cost of the line freeze will be borne by the City. The cost of the brick mailbox removal or relocation will be borne by the property owner.
4. If an attempt to freeze a water service line fails, the appointment will be rescheduled to allow time for the City to coordinate with the property owner and arrange for the installation of a new B-Box in an accessible location or, in the case of a brick mailbox obstruction, arrange for the removal and/or relocation of said mailbox within thirty (30) calendar days. The cost of the new B-Box installation and restoration will be borne by the City. The cost of the brick mailbox removal or relocation will be borne by the property owner.

**Water Heater Obstruction**

The Contractor will need a four foot clear work area in front of the existing water meter. When a residential water meter is obstructed by a water heater, the Contractor will, after notifying the City, undertake one of the following tasks:

1. Remove and reinstall the water heater, if necessary, to allow for installation of the water meter. Work to be completed for this task will include draining, temporarily removing, reinstalling, filling, and testing the water heater for leaks. Given the age and condition of some of the water heaters, it is likely that some will fail after being reinstalled, such as leaking drain valves, leaking pressure relief valves, and internal liner leaks, among others. Prior to the Contractor removing a water heater, the property owner will be required to execute a hold harmless and waiver of liability agreement with the City. Under no circumstance will the City purchase and install a new water heater or reimburse a property owner for a new water heater. The cost of removing and reinstalling a water heater will be borne by the City; or
2. Utilize a re-setter device to avoid removing the water heater. The cost of the re-setter device and its installation will be borne by the City.

Should a property owner not execute a hold harmless agreement, then the City will hold them responsible for removing and reinstalling the water heater to allow access for installation of the water meter. The Contractor will notify the City that the property has refused to execute the agreement, and the City will provide notice to the property owner that removal of the obstruction is required within thirty (30) calendar days. The water shut off procedure identified later in this Policy will be followed.

### **Carpentry Obstruction**

The Contractor may encounter residential water meters that are obstructed by some sort of home improvement or custom carpentry (i.e. interior wall, closet, cabinet, built in bookcase, etc.). In these situations, the property owner will need to remove, or have contractually removed, the carpentry obstruction to allow the Contractor access to replace the water meter. If a re-setter device can be installed without removing the obstruction, this option will be utilized by the Contractor. The cost of the resetter device and its installation will be borne by the City. All costs associated with removing some sort of home improvement or custom carpentry will be borne by the property owner. The City shall provide the customer thirty (30) calendar days to remove the carpentry obstruction, and if necessary, follow the water shut off procedure to gain compliance.

### **Handling Differences in Water Consumption Readings Between Register and Remote**

When the new water meters are installed, the Contractor will take final water meter readings on the old meters and external remote "blue box" reader, if applicable. The City will finalize water meter billings for the old meters using the lesser of the two water consumption readings. The Contractor will take pictures of the old meter register and "blue box" as proof of final readings and then discard the old devices. The Contractor will have each property owner or water customer acknowledge, by signature, all work

completed and final meter readings taken. If they refuse to acknowledge by signature, such will be noted on the work order by the Contractor.

### **Utilizing Existing Brass Angle Valves Versus Installing New Lead Free Brass Ball Valves**

As part of the installation process, the City Council authorized all valves, both before and after the meter, be replaced at the City's expense. For nearly all residential customers, or service lines of two inches or less, the Contractor has been approved to install a lead free ANSI/NSF 61-8 certified brass ball valve(s). For lines greater than two inches, valves must be replaced in kind. Valve replacements will be paid for at the Contract unit price.

The City may to utilize and not replace an existing right angle brass valve, if determined appropriate. In addition, the City may utilize, not replace, resilient wedge valves and double disk valves commonly used in larger industrial applications, if the Contractor determines that the condition of the existing valves are like new.

### **Certifying All Backflow (RPZ) Devices**

While the City is not responsible for maintenance and replacement of backflow devices, their existence and operation are critical to the protection of the City's public water supply. The Contractor will inventory, test, and certify for compliance all backflow devices, at the City's cost.

Once tested, these devices will then be logged into a data base and tracked/monitored for annual certification by the property or business owner. If the RPZ fails during testing, the property owner will be notified and it will be her or his responsibility to have the RPZ replaced and certified as required by the Illinois Plumbing Code. In the future, the property owners will continue to be responsible for scheduling and the cost of the annual inspection as required by the Illinois Plumbing Code.

For non-residential accounts, when a business has multiple backflow devices throughout its facility, the City will test and re-certify only the "master" RPZ installed on the domestic water supply side at the point of entry to the building. For facilities that may not have a "master" RPZ, all internal devices will be tested and re-certified. In addition, all devices that are attached to the building's fire protection system, including devices on the fire system's bypass line, will be tested and re-certified.

### **Internal Plumbing Irregularities**

At the time of installation, prior to the performance of any work, the Contractor will inspect the condition of the existing plumbing. If the Contractor determines that the old piping is leaking or deteriorated to a point that it will likely be damaged when the meter is replaced, and if additional plumbing work is required beyond the scope of the contract, the appointment will be rescheduled to allow time for the property owner to address the identified issues. The rescheduled installation of the new water meter, Register, MIU, and/or AMR equipment will only take place after the property owner has completed the necessary additional plumbing work.

The Contractor will notify the City, prior to the installation of a meter, of any internal meter and/or plumbing irregularities including, the following:

- (a) meters installed backwards;
- (b) disconnected meters and/or any other indication of tampering;
- (c) meters have been removed and replaced with connection pipes;
- (d) registers disconnected from meters;
- (e) illegal connections before a meter; and,
- (f) unmetered connections of a customer's plumbing to a service lateral, fire pipe or water main.

The City shall provide the customer thirty (30) calendar days to correct the internal plumbing irregularities, and if necessary, follow the water shut off procedure to gain compliance.

#### **Elimination of Meter By-Pass Piping**

There are a few situations known to staff where piping has been installed to purposely by-pass the City's water meter. When the Contractor encounters a meter with by-pass piping, it will remove the by-pass.

#### **Water Shut Off Procedure - Failure to Cooperate with Scheduling or Allowing Access**

The City or its Contractor will issue to every property owner and/or water customer:

1. A letter requesting that they contact the Contractor to schedule an appointment to have their water meter replaced. The initial letter will request compliance within thirty (30) calendar days after issuance.
2. Should a property owner and/or water customer not respond within thirty (30) calendar days of receiving the first letter, a second letter will be mailed to their attention. This reminder/second letter will require compliance within ten (10) calendar days after issuance.
3. If the property owner and/or water customer still fails to schedule an appointment, a shut off notice will be physically posted at the service address. The shut off notice will require compliance within ten (10) calendar days of posting or the Director of Public Works will cause the water service to be discontinued to gain compliance. The shut off notice will provide the property owner and/or water customer with the date water service will be discontinued should they not comply.

If the City is forced to shut off water to gain compliance, said water will not be turned back on until an appointment has been made for the water meter replacement. If the water service remains off for more than forty-eight (48) hours, the property will also be posted as uninhabitable and not approved for occupancy. In addition, if the water service is discontinued, the City will charge forty dollars (\$40.00) to re-establish service during regular business hours. If re-establishment of service is required after regular business hours, the fee will be one hundred dollars (\$100.00).

If the City is forced to discontinue water service to get the property owner and/or water customer to schedule an appointment, and then once an appointment has been made, if the property owner and/or water customer fails to allow access for the replacement, the Director of Public Works will cause the water service to be discontinued to gain compliance. If the City is forced to shut off water for failure to show or allow access, said water will not be turned on until the water meter is replaced. If the water service remains shut off for more than forty-eight (48) hours, the property will also be posted as uninhabitable and not approved for occupancy. In addition, if the water service is discontinued, the City will charge forty dollars (\$40.00) to re-establish service during regular business hours. If re-establishment of service is required after regular business hours the fee will be one hundred dollars (\$100.00).

**Water Shut Off Procedure - Failure to Remove Obstruction or Correct Plumbing Irregularities**

If the City requires a property owner to incur costs to remove a carpentry obstruction, brick mailbox, or correct an internal plumbing irregularity, the City shall provide written notice to the property owner requesting compliance within thirty (30) calendar days.

If the person upon whom due notice has been served fails, neglects, or refuses to remove the obstruction or correct the plumbing irregularities, within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of notice, a shut off notice will be physically posted at the service address. The shut off notice will require compliance within ten (10) calendar days of posting or the Director of Public Works will cause the water service to be discontinued to gain compliance. The shut off notice will provide the property owner and/or water customer with the date water service will be discontinued should they not comply.

Time extensions may be granted, by the Director of Public Works, only upon receipt of a written request for such time extensions by the person upon whom due notice has been served. All requests for time extensions must provide a reason for said extension and must be received within the time provided for said compliance. All reasonable requests for an extension of time will be considered and will be granted when, in the discretion of the Director of Public Works, or his duly authorized representative, it is determined that the extension will not result in an immediate danger to the public health, safety, comfort and welfare.

If the City is forced to shut off water to gain compliance, said water will not be turned back on until compliance is achieved. If the water service remains shut off for more than forty-eight (48) hours, the property will also be posted as uninhabitable and not approved for occupancy. In addition, if the water service is discontinued, the City will charge forty dollars (\$40.00) to re-establish service during regular business hours. If re-establishment of service is required after regular business hours the fee will be one hundred dollars (\$100.00).